

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO USIA WASHDC

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SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL DISPLAY "LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF
HAPPINESS" IN CAR

1. SUMMARY: THE USIS PRESENTATION, "LIFE, LIBERTY AND
THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS", CONCLUDED ITS SUCCESSFUL FOUR-
WEEK RUN IN BANGUI JULY 10. THE EXPOSITION CONSISTED OF
THE USIS POSTER DISPLAY ON EARLY AMERICAN HISTORY, A SERIES
OF DOCUMENTARY FILMS ON THE UNITED STATES, AND TWO SPECIAL
CEREMONIES MARKING THE EXPOSITION'S OPENING AND CLOSING.
THE EVENT FORMED THE BASIS FOR THE USIS BICENTENNIAL CELE-
BRATION IN THE CAR AND ATTRACTED A TOTAL OF 16,000 VISITORS.
END SUMMARY.

2. THE EXPOSITION "LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF
HAPPINESS" WAS OPENED JUNE 15 BY THE AMBASSADOR AND GOVERNOR MINISTER OF
INFORMATION LOUIS-PIERRE GAMBA. A RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY
WAS FOLLOWED BY AN OFFICIAL RECEPTION ATTENDED BY MUCH OF
BANGUI'S DIPLOMATIC AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY. THE EXPOSITION
WAS HOUSED IN TWO SALONS OF THE PROTESTANT YOUTH CENTER AND
CONSISTED OF THE USIS POSTER DISPLAY, SEVERAL PAINTING FROM
THE USIS "GREAT AMERICAN ART" SERIES, AND VARIOUS HISTORICAL
AND ARTISTIC ITEMS OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL. A GREAT DEAL OF
IMPROVISATION AND FLEXIBILITY WAS REQUIRED IN ASSEMBLING
THE EXPOSITION, BUT THE END-PRODUCT WAS COHESIVE AND WELL-
RECEIVED: THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED NUMEROUS COMPLIMENTS AND
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OFFICIAL GOVERNOR APPRECIATION FOR OUR EFFORTS. ALL TYPES OF

VISITORS WERE ATTRACTED DURING THE EXPOSITION'S THREE-WEEK RUN, RANGING FROM GOCAR OFFICIALS TO UNIVERSITY AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO HOMESICK AMERICANS. THE EMBASSY FORMULATED A QUESTIONNAIRE BASED UPON THE EXPOSITION AND SPONSORED A CONTEST WITH PRIZES INCLUDING BOOKS AND PAINTINGS PORTRAYING EARLY AMERICAN HISTORY. OVSF 200 QUESTIONNAIRES WERE TAKEN, OF WHICH EIGHTY WERE RETURNED. THE RESPONSES INDICATED A HEALTHY INTEREST IN THE EXPOSITION IN PARTICULAR AND US HISTORY IN GENERAL. PRIZES WERE AWARDED BY THE AMBASSADOR AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY JULY 10.

3. A SERIES OF USIS DOCUMENTARY FILMS IN FRENCH WERE SHOWN IN AN AUDITORIUM ADJACENT TO THE EXPOSITION HALL. ATTENDANCE FOR SEVENTEEN FILM SHOWINGS WAS OVER 6,000 WITH ATTENDANCE LIMITED PRIMARILY BY THE CAPACITY OF THE AUDITORIUM. THE MAJORITY OF THE VIEWERS WERE HIGH SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, THOUGH GOCAR OFFICIALS WERE IN ATTENDANCE FOR SEVERAL SHOWINGS. THE PEOPLE OF THE CAR ARE USUALLY A TIGHT AUDIENCE, BUT THE USIS SERIES WAS UNIVERSALLY WELL-RECEIVED. MOST POPULAR WERE TRAVELOGUES AND FILMS ON US HISTORY; LEAST POPULAR WERE BIOGRAPHIES (E.G. LE REVE DE MARTIN LUTHER KING). AFTER ONE EVENING OF FILMS ("NATION EN MOUVEMENT" AND "JAZZ RETROUNE AU FOYER"), THERE WAS A SPECIAL EXCITEMENT AND EMBASSY OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE WERE OBLIGED TO RECOUNT THEIR EXPERIENCES IN THE US TO CAR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.

4. THE POST IS HIGHLY PLEASED WITH THE SUCCESS OF THE DISPLAY. THE PANELS THEMSELVES WILL BE USED THROUGHOUT FY-77 AS A CONTINUING PORTION OF OUR BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION AND WE PLAN TO FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN AMERICAN HISTORY GENERATED AMONG CENTRAL AFRICAN YOUTH BY THE EXPOSITION. QUAINTON

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